

# Graduation Requirements for Students in Missouri's Public Schools



➤ *Guidelines for principals, counselors and other school personnel*



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Missouri Department of Elementary and  
Secondary Education

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## Introduction

Young people and their families make few decisions that affect their lives as profoundly as choosing a high school program of studies. Choosing an inadequate or inappropriate program can severely restrict a student's educational and career options. Choosing the right program can open doors of opportunity that can lead to a lifetime of economic and social productivity. This important decision cannot be left to chance.

Local boards of education must develop policies related to graduation that will ensure that every graduate can become a productive citizen. A complete and formalized guidance and counseling program should also be available to students and parents to provide assistance and support in this important activity. Every family should have timely access to the full range of information necessary to make effective decisions about the student's course of studies, including:

- the Show-Me Standards;
- the state and local graduation requirements;
- the full program of studies available in the high school, including course descriptions and objectives;
- information about individual academic strengths and weaknesses;
- entrance requirements for colleges, universities and other postsecondary institutions; and
- broad information about careers and the necessary vocational-technical training for them.

A program with these elements will enable students to pursue high school programs of studies that expand their opportunities and ensure that they can be productive members of society. 🍌



## Background

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education last published guidelines on graduation requirements in 1997. Since that time, there have been no major changes in either the requirements or expectations for high school graduates. However, it seems appropriate to update this document now, at the beginning of the first decade of the 21st century, to ensure its relevancy for the coming years.

In 1984, the State Board of Education established 22 units of credit as the minimum requirement for high school graduation. This requirement and the units required in each subject area have not changed since then. As they have in the past, school districts still have the flexibility to exceed the minimum state requirements.

In 1993, the Missouri legislature passed the Outstanding Schools Act, which calls for adoption of academic standards to clearly define what Missouri students should know and how they should be able to apply that knowledge by the time they graduate from high school. In response, the State Board of Education adopted 73 academic standards, known as the Show-Me Standards, in January 1996. Developed by some of Missouri's best teachers and administrators with input from citizens throughout the state, the Show-Me Standards added a new dimension to the state's traditional graduation requirements. Where current graduation requirements state expectations in terms of passing grades and units of credit (a measure of time spent in class), the Show-Me Standards describe the knowledge and skills students will need to be successful after high school.

The Show-Me Standards, which took effect May 30, 1996, have not changed current graduation requirements. They are, however, guiding elementary- and secondary-school educators throughout the state as they review local curricula and align it to support the Show-Me Standards. The courses that make up the credit-based graduation requirement system should reflect the knowledge and performance goals in the Show-Me Standards.

Also, a state assessment system, the Missouri Assessment Program, has been developed to measure student progress toward the Show-Me Standards. The new assessment system includes multiple-choice and short-answer questions and performance events that ask students to demonstrate how well they can apply their knowledge.

In 1994, the Coordinating Board for Higher Education adopted new "core curriculum" standards for admission to Missouri's public colleges and universities. The same year, the State Board of Education revised its requirements for the College Preparatory Studies Certificate to match the Coordinating Board's requirements. 🍌

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## Purpose

This publication is designed to help answer questions for principals, counselors, teachers, students and parents about credit requirements and the various options that individual students may have for meeting the requirements. (All major documents related to graduation requirements and standards appear as appendices.) School districts should review this

*... a resource for educators as they blend the traditional graduation requirements with the performance-based expectations contained in the Show-Me Standards.*

handbook and make sure all staff members are aware of current requirements and policies. Students should be informed about all requirements in time to properly plan their high school programs.

This handbook should also serve as a resource for educators as they blend the traditional graduation requirements with the performance-based expectations contained in the Show-Me Standards. This handbook will help Missouri educators make the graduation requirements and learning expectations clear to students, parents and others in their communities. 🍌

## Planning a Program of High School Studies

If they are to make choices that will enhance their post-high school opportunities, students need extensive academic and career awareness/exploration activities starting as early as elementary school with an emphasis at the middle school, junior high school and high school levels. Career awareness and exploration activities should begin in the early grades to provide a foundation for these decisions.

During the middle or junior high school years, students should have the opportunity to take exploratory courses that help them identify interests leading to career goals. Students and their families should receive extensive formal and informal information about career options and the requisite education and training for each. Students and their families should also have access to well-planned guidance services that will enable them to make informed choices in choosing a high school program of studies.

By the end of the eighth grade, all students should have: 1) sufficient information to have developed tentative career goals; 2) sufficient knowledge of their academic strengths and weaknesses to guide planning for high school; 3) a thorough knowledge of state and local graduation requirements; and 4) information about the program of studies available in the high school each student will attend. With this information and with the help of counselors and/or teachers, students and their families should plan tentative four-year programs of studies. The decisions should be considered tentative because career and educational goals may change, academic problems may develop or new requirements may be added.

Federal and state regulations pertaining to the implementation of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) require that transition be addressed for all students with an Individualized Education Program (IEP) beginning at age 16 (or younger if appropriate). Requirements for these transition services are located in the Special Education State Plan, which can be accessed through the Division of Special Education Web site at [www.dese.state.mo.us/divspeced/Compliance](http://www.dese.state.mo.us/divspeced/Compliance).

Schools should enable students to gain a solid foundation of academic knowledge and skills and prepare students for life after school, for higher education, and for productive employment and citizenship. As provided in the Outstanding Schools Act of 1993, the State Board of Education has adopted 73 academic performance standards, known as the Show-Me Standards, which establish the knowledge, skills and competencies needed for students to advance through elementary and



secondary education, qualify them for high school graduation, and prepare them for postsecondary education or the workplace and/or both.

**All students who plan to attend postsecondary education (community colleges, technical schools or four-year colleges and universities) should become familiar with the academic requirements for acceptance in those institutions of interest.** In addition, students who expect to attend four-year colleges or universities should consider following the course of studies necessary to earn the State Board of Education College Preparatory Studies Certificate (see Appendix A) and also meet the Coordinating Board for Higher Education (CBHE) High School Core Curriculum Requirement for college admission (see Appendix B). The CBHE core curriculum requirements are applicable for admission to all Missouri public four-year colleges and universities for all first-time, degree-seeking college students who graduate from high school.

Students who are interested in vocational-technical education or in combining the last two years of high school with two years of community college through Tech Prep education or 2+2 offerings should examine those programs of study that will allow for the smooth transition to postsecondary education or the workplace and/or both.

Students attending high schools that are designated as “A+” should become familiar with the requirements for certain tuition waivers to community colleges or other postsecondary institutions. Following the planned course of study will enhance the chances for success of students entering postsecondary training or the workplace immediately after graduation.

Some students do not make career choices or decide to enroll in postsecondary programs until late in the junior year or even during the senior year and, therefore, they have not prepared themselves academically to succeed. It is important for all students to take a meaningful program of studies so that a variety of options are open to them no matter how late their decisions are made.

School personnel, students and parents should continuously review programs of study and modify them when all agree changes are desirable. This planning and monitoring process should result in all students completing high school well prepared for work or postsecondary studies and/or both. 🍌

## High School Graduation Requirements Set by State Board of Education

The State Board of Education establishes **minimum** graduation requirements that are designed to ensure that graduates have taken courses in several different subject areas and that should result in students having mastered essential knowledge, skills and competencies. Local boards of education must adopt graduation policies that include at least the state minimum graduation requirements. Local board policy may include additional requirements in accordance with needs and aspirations of students and the communities they serve.

**The state minimum high school graduation requirements comprise 22 units of credit that must be earned between grades 9**

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and 12. The requirements are stated in terms of the number of units of credit that must be earned in each of several subject areas. To earn one unit of credit, a student must meet all the course requirements and earn a passing grade in a course that meets for at least 7,830 minutes a year. Half- and quarter-units of credit may be earned for courses meeting proportionately fewer minutes. Following are the requirements by subject area and, in some cases, specific courses, together with interpretative notations.

### Minimum State Graduation Requirements

SUBJECT	UNITS
Communication Arts . . . . .	3
Mathematics . . . . .	2
Science . . . . .	2
Social Studies . . . . .	2
Fine Arts . . . . .	1
Practical Arts . . . . .	1
Physical Education . . . . .	1
Electives . . . . .	10
Total minimum number of units required . . . . .	22

#### ► Communication Arts

At least three units selected to enable students to master important knowledge and skills in the areas of standard grammar and usage; composition; speaking; reading, interpreting and appreciating various genre of literature; and reading, interpreting and using technical manuals, schedules, graphs and other forms of written communication.

**Interpretative Notes:** Courses in foreign language, school publications, yearbook, media, photography, and radio and television may not be counted toward meeting the minimum requirements. Speech and debate courses are counted for communication arts credit. Scholastic journalism may be counted for communication arts credit only if it is taught by a certificated English teacher.

#### ► Mathematics

At least two units selected to ensure that students have strong problem-solving skills and a foundation in the mathematical concepts of number sense; geometry and spatial sense; measurement; data analysis; statistics; patterns and relationships; algebraic thinking; mathematical systems; number theory; and discrete topics.

**Interpretative Notes:** Courses commonly named “computer math,” the content of which is computer literacy, introductory computer programming and nominal mathematics applications on computers, may not be counted toward meeting the minimum requirements in mathematics.

#### ► Science

At least two units selected to ensure that students have mastered the unifying concepts, principles and laws common to all the sciences; can competently apply the scientific method; and can organize and solve scientific problems in consumer, career and technical environments.

## ► Social Studies

At least two units selected to enable students to master important knowledge and skills in the areas of civic knowledge and responsibility; economic systems and functions; governmental functions; geography; world history; and American history. One of the two units must be American history, and the equivalent of one-half unit must be in government.

**Interpretative Notes:** Section 170.011, RSMo, requires all schools to provide regular instruction in the constitutions of the United States and of the state of Missouri and in American history and institutions, beginning not later than seventh grade and continuing in high school. High school graduates must have passed a test or tests over that subject matter. The test(s), which may be administered at any grade, 7-12, must be developed or selected by the local school district. The date on which the test(s) were passed must be noted on students' transcripts. Section 170.011, RSMo, also requires all high schools to offer, during grades 9-12, the equivalent of one-half unit of credit in the institutions, branches and functions of the government of the state of Missouri, including local government, and of the government of the United States and in the electoral process. All students must take and pass the course(s) designated for meeting this requirement. The course(s) must be clearly identified on students' transcripts. (See Appendix C for more detailed information about the provisions of Section 170.011, RSMo.)

## ► Fine Arts

At least one unit, which must be from the following: music, visual arts, dance or theater, and that ensures that students master fundamental knowledge of the subject, including history, aesthetics and criticism, and produce or perform at an introductory level in at least one area of fine arts.

**Interpretative Notes:** Only music, visual arts, dance or theater may be counted toward meeting the minimum requirements. Foreign language, literature, literature appreciation, speech, debate, radio and television, and stagecraft may not be counted. To earn fine arts credit for marching band or drum corps, students must also play musical instruments and participate as musicians during times of concert or performing activities.

## ► Practical Arts

At least one unit designed to provide life skills or to contribute particularly to the student's career goals.

**Interpretative Notes:** Practical arts courses are those in which students learn to integrate academic knowledge and skills with prevocational and vocational or technical knowledge and skills and to apply them in authentic situations. Practical arts courses include courses of general interest such as keyboarding, computer applications, school publications and technology education as well as career/technical courses.

## ► Physical Education

At least one unit that provides students with knowledge and skills necessary for developing and maintaining a lifestyle fostering physical fitness, participation in recreational activities and general concern for personal well-being.

**Interpretative Notes:** Physical education programs must focus on the knowledge and skills needed for the development of cardiorespiratory endurance, muscular strength, flexibility and body composition. The programs must stress the importance of physical activity as an important component of lifetime health and wellness. Courses devoted to conditioning for interscholastic sports or practicing for interscholastic sports may not be counted toward meeting the minimum requirement. Courses offered for elective credit may include exercise or learning about team or individual sports.

*Local boards of education must adopt graduation policies that include at least the state minimum graduation requirements.*



### ➤ Electives

At least 10 units carefully selected to ensure mastery of important basic academic knowledge, skills and competencies that may otherwise not have been mastered; to extend and enhance mastery of advanced academic skills; to prepare students with employment skills; and, for students not pursuing postsecondary education, to ensure that they have the knowledge and skills needed to prepare for employment in current and emerging fields.

**Interpretative Notes:** Every elective should be chosen because the knowledge and skills taught in the course will strengthen a student's vocational-education preparation and increase the student's probability of succeeding in postsecondary education. Students should not be permitted to select electives randomly or simply to accumulate the required number of units of credit. 🍌

## Local Boards of Education Required to Adopt Graduation Policies

Local boards of education must adopt and disseminate written policies concerning graduation. The policies must clearly set forth all requirements and all allowable variations. Local graduation policies must include at least the state minimum requirements and may exceed the state minimums by requiring more total units of credit, requiring more units within a particular subject or establishing additional requirements. 🍌

## Special Policy Consideration for Students With Disabilities Under IDEA

Each school district must provide a free, appropriate public education for students with disabilities until they are graduated with a regular diploma or attain the age of 21 years. Local school boards must establish policies and guidelines that ensure that students with disabilities have the opportunity to earn credits toward graduation in a nondiscriminatory manner and within the spirit and intent of that requirement. Provisions include:

1. Any specific graduation requirement may be waived for a disabled student if recommended by the IEP committee.
2. Students with disabilities receive grades and have credit transcribed in the same manner as all other students when they complete the same courses as other students.
3. Students with disabilities who complete regular courses modified as indicated in their IEPs to accommodate their disabilities will receive grades and have credit transcribed in that same manner as students who complete the same courses without modification; however, the fact that the courses were modified may be noted on the transcripts.
4. Students with disabilities who meet the goals and objectives of their IEPs, as measured by the evaluation procedures and criteria specified in the IEPs, will have credit transcribed in accordance with the state definition of units of credit.
5. All students with disabilities who meet state and local graduation requirements by taking and passing regular courses without



modification; taking and passing regular courses with modification; or successfully achieving IEP goals and objectives shall be graduated and receive regular high school diplomas.

6. Students with disabilities who reach age 21, or otherwise terminate their education, and who have met the district's attendance requirements but who have not completed the requirements for graduation, receive a certificate of attendance. 📄

## **Special Policy Considerations for Students With Disabilities Under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973**

School districts need to comply with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and ensure that graduation policies do not discriminate against students with disabilities protected under that act. Technical assistance may be obtained from the Regional Office of the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Civil Rights (OCR) in Kansas City. Call (816) 880-4200. Information is also available on the DESE Web site at [www.dese.state.mo.us/divspeced/](http://www.dese.state.mo.us/divspeced/). 📄

## **Variances and Substitutions for the State Minimum Graduation Requirements**

The state minimum graduation requirements cannot be applied with absolute uniformity in every case. Students' individual situations sometimes require consideration of variances and alternatives. Following are descriptions of areas in which local boards of education may adopt policies that vary from the state standard minimum graduation requirements. If a local board chooses to allow these variances and alternatives, it must do so through officially adopted policies and through procedures that will ensure fair and consistent application of its policies.



➤ **Placement, Credit and Variances for Students Who Transfer Into a District**

Local boards of education have authority to establish reasonable, nondiscriminatory policies for determining grade placement of transfer students and recognizing credit from their prior schools. The Department recommends the following policies.

Transferring From	Suggested Policy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Another public high school in Missouri accredited by the State Board of Education.</li> </ul>	Accept grade placement and credit as stated on transcript.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A nonpublic high school in Missouri accredited by the North Central Association (NCA), Independent Schools Association of Central States (ISACS), or the University of Missouri Committee on Accredited Schools.</li> </ul>	Accept grade placement and credit as stated on transcript and equated to the Carnegie Unit as defined in Missouri.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A public or nonpublic high school in another state accredited by that state's department of education, NCA or its equivalent, or ISACS or its equivalent agency.</li> </ul>	Accept grade placement and credit as stated on transcript and equated to the Carnegie Unit as defined in Missouri.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An unaccredited public or nonpublic high school in Missouri or another state, or from a home school.</li> </ul>	<p>Review reported courses and any available achievement test or other performance data; interview student and parents; administer formal and informal assessments if records are inadequate; and make a tentative placement decision based on available information. If placement is ninth grade, students should be required to meet all state and local graduation requirements. If placement is tenth grade or higher, develop with student and parents a graduation program of studies that, if completed, will earn a high school diploma. Review placement and academic progress with student and parents periodically.</p> <p><b>Note:</b> Parents/guardians of home-schooled children must provide documentation as required in RSMo 167.031.</p>

Sometimes transfer students cannot reasonably meet all state and local graduation requirements within the usual four years of attendance. If a transfer student from a Missouri high school is placed as a junior or senior, local policy may permit the student to graduate upon satisfactory completion of a program of studies that would have met the graduation requirements at the school formerly attended. Such students would have to meet the requirements in Section 170.011, RSMo. (See Appendix C for a complete discussion of the requirements of Section 170.011.)

Transfer students from another state or country or a home school may be graduated upon successful completion of an individualized program of studies that school officials, parents and students agree will

prepare the students for post-high school goals, even though the program of studies may not include 22 units of credit as defined in Missouri. Seniors transferring from other states or countries may be graduated without meeting the requirements of Section 170.011, RSMo.

► **Students Transferring Between Districts With Significantly Different Schedule Programs and Graduation Requirements**

To meet the minimum graduation requirements set by the State Board of Education, a student must earn 22 units of credit in grades 9-12. To earn one unit of credit, a student must satisfy all course requirements and earn a passing grade in a course that meets for at least 7,830 minutes a year (or proportionately fewer minutes for half- and quarter-units of credit).

Some school districts offer program schedules and graduation requirements that differ significantly from more traditional programs. In these cases, students may spend considerably less time in a given class than the generally required 7,830 minutes, but they are also required to attend more classes in a day. In such programs, students may be issued one unit of credit per course, but they are also usually required to earn 40 or so units in order to graduate.

When students transfer between school districts with significantly different schedule programs and graduation requirements, questions arise about how many units of credit should be issued to students by the receiving school districts (in order to be equitable to students as well as to maintain district graduation requirements). To recognize and accommodate these differences, school districts are encouraged to establish a clearly written policy detailing how to manage such transfers when they occur. Such policies should be fair and equitable to students, take into consideration the schedule program and number of graduation requirements of the sending district, and ensure that students will meet the graduation standards of the receiving district.

► **Waiver of Required Academic Credit for Students Completing a Career Technical Program of Studies**

Local board of education policy may permit a waiver of one unit of academic credit (communication arts, mathematics, science or social studies) for students who complete a three-unit career technical program of studies. The three-unit career technical program must constitute a planned program leading to specific career-related competencies, not simply any three units of credit. The academic subject in which the waiver is granted must be one in which the student has received substantial instruction in the career-technical education program. For example, students completing a three-unit agricultural education program or a health sciences program might be permitted to waive one unit of science; students completing a three-unit electricity/electronics program might be permitted to waive one unit of mathematics.

► **Credit by Correspondence/ Courses Delivered Primarily Through Electronic Media**

Local board of education policy may recognize units of credit from correspondence schools toward meeting the state and local graduation requirements. To be eligible for recognition, correspondence credit must be from the University of Missouri Center for Distance and Independent

Study or from a correspondence school accredited by the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools or its equivalent regional accreditation agency. Students may earn credit toward meeting the state minimum graduation requirements through courses delivered primarily through electronic media such as satellite video courses, cable video courses, interactive education television consortium, and computer-driven or online courses.

➤ **Credit for Off-Campus Instruction**

Under some circumstances, students may earn high school credit for off-campus learning experiences. (See Appendix D for a description of the conditions and limitations.)

➤ **Dual Credit for High School and College Courses**

Students may earn both high school and college credit for some coursework under some circumstances. Generally, such arrangements fall into two types: 1) arrangements in which advanced high school courses are taught on the high school campus by teachers designated as adjunct instructors by a college or university; and 2) arrangements in which high school students leave the high school campus and attend regular college classes for part of the school day. (See Appendix E for a description of the conditions and limitations.)

➤ **Alternative, Performance-Based Graduation**

Increasingly, educators and others are recognizing that completing a specified number of units of credit does not ensure that students will obtain the knowledge, competencies and skills that are considered essential to success in postsecondary studies or on the job. The State Board of Education has authorized the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to waive the standard graduation requirements for school districts that wish to develop and implement performance-based graduation standards as an alternative to the credit-based requirements. Any school district interested in this alternative should contact the Supervision Section for information and guidance in developing such a system.

➤ **Credit for Alternative Arrangements**

Some students cannot schedule within the regular school day all the courses they wish to take and, therefore, take some courses under special arrangements such as “Zero Hour,” evening community education programs, centers for at-risk youth, or summer-school programs. Other students are unable to succeed in conventional high school instruction and pursue secondary programs in alternative settings. Local boards of education may, by policy, recognize high school credit for such classes if: 1) the instructors hold valid teaching certificates; 2) the course content and performance standards have been reviewed and determined by the staff of the local high school to be equivalent to corresponding high school courses; and 3) the instructional time is reasonably equated to the state standard for the Carnegie Unit for purposes of granting units of credit. 🍌



## Seventh- and Eighth-Grade Students Who Complete High School Level Courses

Increasingly, academically advanced students in elementary and middle school/junior high school grades are completing coursework such as algebra I or the first level of a foreign language. Districts are encouraged to provide such opportunities for students and to record the appropriate units of credit on students' transcripts with the notation that those courses have been successfully completed prior to ninth grade and that the students began ninth grade with advanced standing. The advanced standing credit may be counted toward meeting the subject-area requirements for graduation. However, all students must still earn at least 22 units of credit during grades 9-12. 🍌

## Restrictions on Use of GED

School districts may not adopt or implement policies or practices under which students who do not meet the state or local minimum graduation requirements are granted a high school diploma by taking the Tests of General Educational Development (GED) except through the GED Option Program. 🍌

## Number of Semesters of Attendance Required

Traditionally, a high school education has consisted of four years (eight semesters) of attendance. Some students, however, may complete graduation requirements early, and they may need the challenge of pursuing postsecondary studies. Other students may need more time than the usual four years to complete requirements. Those students need the support of the school and community, as well as their parents, to complete high school, even if it requires five or more years. The important goal is finishing high school with a good education — not graduating within a specific number of years.

Local boards of education may, by policy, permit students who have met all state and local graduation requirements to exit high school earlier than the usual eight semesters. The conditions for early exit should be communicated unambiguously to all students and their parents, and the policy should be followed in the most consistent manner possible. Policies should be flexible enough to permit and encourage part-time attendance and other arrangements for students who may need more than four years to complete a sound high school education. 🍌

## Graduation by Adults Who Did Not Complete High School

Although adults who did not complete high school may earn a Certificate of High School Equivalence by passing the Tests of General Educational Development (GED), many adults wish to obtain a standard high school diploma. The Certificate of High School Equivalence is

issued by the State Board of Education and may not be exchanged for a high school diploma except for certain at-risk students who are part of the GED Option Program. In addition, the GED test scores may not be used for the purpose of granting credit toward a standard high school diploma.

Local boards of education may establish adult high school diploma programs under guidelines adopted by the State Board of Education and policies under which adults may obtain standard high school diplomas by meeting the minimum graduation requirements of the district. (See Appendix F for a description of the conditions and limitations.) All credit earned by the adults during high school and since leaving school should be collected and validated to determine deficiencies, and all deficiencies should be met through coursework meeting current standards for granting credit. 🍌

## Honorary High School Diploma

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, in cooperation with the Missouri Veterans Commission, administers a program entitled “Operation Recognition,” which was established during the 2001 legislative session through House Bill 441. (See Appendix G.) The purpose of this statewide program is to award honorary high school diplomas to World War I, World War II and Korean War veterans who left high school prior to graduation to enter the United States Armed Forces. These veterans have been given this opportunity to receive an honorary high school diploma as a tribute to their military service in answering the call of their state and nation.

Applications may be obtained from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, Division of Vocational and Adult Education, or the Missouri Veterans Commission. All applications are sent to the Commission for verification of time in service and confirmation that the veteran received an honorable discharge. Approved applications are then sent to the Department to verify their Missouri address and to identify the school district where the diploma is to be sent. The Department issues an honorary high school diploma on behalf of the State Board of Education to any eligible veteran. These diplomas may be awarded posthumously. School districts and school administrators are asked to cooperate in the presentation of these diplomas. 🍌



## Appendix A

### *Requirements and Guidelines for the College Preparatory Studies Certificate*

The Missouri State Board of Education awards the College Preparatory Studies Certificate (CPSC) to Missouri students who successfully complete a rigorous academic program in high school. The certificate is awarded in addition to the regular high school diploma granted by local school districts. Created by the Board in 1985, the certificate is designed to provide incentive and recognition for public and nonpublic high school students who exceed the state's minimum graduation requirements. Because the certificate is awarded by the state, local schools may not add additional requirements for students to qualify.

In 1994, the State Board of Education revised its requirements for the CPSC in order to align with the "Core Curriculum" standards recommended by the Coordinating Board for Higher Education as a basis for college admissions in Missouri.

Awarding the College Preparatory Studies Certificate is voluntary on the part of school districts, and meeting the requirements is voluntary on the part of students. While the certificate is primarily intended as an incentive for college-bound students, those who are not planning to enter college also may wish to work toward earning the award. School officials are encouraged to use the program to encourage all students to pursue excellence in their high school studies.

**To be eligible for the certificate, a student must meet the following requirements.**

1. Complete a rigorous high school program cooperatively planned by the school, the student and the student's parents. The program must include at least the following units of credit.



Subject	College Prep Certificate Requirements	State Minimum Requirements
Communication Arts	4	3
Mathematics	3	2
Science	2	2
Social Studies	3	2
Fine Arts	1	1
Practical Arts	1	1
Physical Education	1	1
Electives	9	10
<b>Minimum units required</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>22</b>
<i>(Eligibility for a College Preparatory Studies Certificate does not ensure admission to a specific college or university. Students should consider admission requirements specific to the college or university to which they may seek to apply as they select high school courses.)</i>		

2. Earn at least a 3.0 grade point average (GPA) on a 4.0 scale in the combined subject areas of English/language arts, mathematics, science and social studies. The school may calculate GPAs for its students at the end of the seventh or eighth semester of high school.
3. Score above the prior year's national composite average mean on the American College Test (ACT) or on the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT). This criterion is revised annually to reflect the latest national averages from the ACT and SAT. **Check the current year's certification forms for the required minimum scores.**
4. Complete a strong academic program, as specifically outlined in the section that follows, in the subject areas of English/language arts, mathematics, science, social studies and specified core electives. **No substitutions are authorized.**

Dual-credit courses taken in high school for both high school and college credit may be counted toward satisfying the core curriculum requirements.

Middle/junior high school courses taken by middle/junior high school students in mathematics and foreign language may be counted as satisfying the high school core curriculum requirement if the content is equivalent to high school courses (e.g., foreign language I and algebra I) and if subsequent courses in the subject are shown on the high school transcript (e.g., foreign language II and algebra II).

#### ► Communication Arts

At least four units, one of which may be speech or debate, and two units that must be in courses emphasizing composition or writing skills.

**Examples of courses generally acceptable toward the four units:** English or language arts I, II, III and IV; literature courses; journalism (if writing intensive); speech; and debate. Applied Communications may be counted.

**Examples of unacceptable courses:** Yearbook, school publications, acting, theater, dramatics, business English, mass media and photography.

#### ► Mathematics

At least three units of high school-level algebra and beyond, including algebra II.

**Examples of courses generally acceptable toward the three units:** Algebra I, plane geometry, algebra II, precalculus, trigonometry, analytic geometry, calculus and math analysis. Applied Mathematics may be counted only if the student successfully completes a standard algebra II course. Standard algebra courses that have been subdivided (e.g., algebra I is divided into algebra IA and IB) may be counted only as one course unit. Algebra I taken in the seventh or eighth grade may be counted toward meeting the requirement.

**Examples of unacceptable courses:** Computer math, computer programming, consumer math, computer science, pre-algebra, basic math, general math, terminal math, business math and accounting.

#### ► Science

At least two units (**not including general science**) selected from biology, chemistry or physics, one of which is a laboratory course.

**Examples of courses generally acceptable toward the two units:** Botany, zoology, anatomy and physiology, biology, chemistry, and physics. Applications in Biology/Chemistry and Principles of Technology may be counted. Life science, physical science and earth science may be counted **only** if it can be

demonstrated that they are taught at the high school level with a rigor comparable to biology, chemistry or physics.

**Examples of unacceptable courses:** Life science, physical science and earth science if not taught at the high school level in a rigor comparable to biology, chemistry or physics; also, consumer science, outdoor education and environmental studies.

### ► Social Studies

At least three units, including American history and at least one semester of government.

**Examples of courses generally acceptable toward the three units:** World history, American history, American government, civics, principles of democracy, economics, psychology, sociology, political science and geography.

**Examples of unacceptable courses:** Regional history, family living, family relations, marriage and family, consumer education, and courses generally listed under “practical arts” or “human environmental science.”

### ► Fine Arts

At least one unit of fine arts courses in the visual arts, music, dance or theater.

**Examples of courses generally acceptable toward the one unit:** Art I, II, III and IV, sculpture, design, drawing, painting, theater, oral interpretation, dance, dramatics, band and any other instrumental music courses, chorus and any other vocal music courses, and art, music or theater appreciation courses.

**Examples of unacceptable courses:** Speech, debate, radio and television, mass media, stagecraft, and arts and crafts.

### ► Specified Core Electives

At least three units selected from foreign language (two units of one foreign language are strongly recommended) and/or combinations from two or more of the following course areas: English, mathematics, social studies, science and fine arts. A computer science course with a prerequisite of at least algebra I is permissible as a mathematics elective. State and/or international history courses are permissible as social studies electives.

### ► General Electives

At least six units sufficient to meet state and local graduation requirements. The courses should be selected and planned by the school, the student and the student’s parents to develop the student’s aptitude and skills. Advanced career-technical courses that have been selected to support and strengthen the student’s college-preparatory program or career choice may be used to fulfill this general elective requirement.

• • •

Each year, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education provides forms to all high school principals so they can certify the number of prospective graduates who have qualified for the College Preparatory Studies Certificate. The Department of Education provides the appropriate number of certificates at no cost to each school or school district. 📄

## For more information about the College Preparatory Studies Certificate, contact:

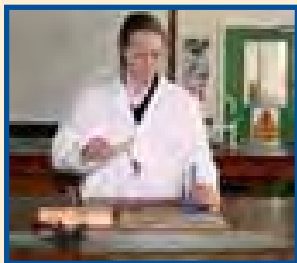
Assistant Commissioner  
Division of School Improvement  
Missouri Department of Elementary  
and Secondary Education  
P.O. Box 480  
Jefferson City, MO 65102-0480

• • •  
Phone (573) 751-4234  
[www.dese.state.mo.us](http://www.dese.state.mo.us)



## Appendix B

### *Course Descriptions* *Coordinating Board for Higher Education* *High School Core Curriculum Requirement* *(Approved 10-13-94; Revised 6-13-96)*



#### ► English

At least four units, one of which may be speech or debate, and two units that must be in courses emphasizing composition or writing skills.

**Examples of courses generally acceptable toward the four units:** English or language arts I, II, III and IV, literature courses, journalism (if writing intensive), speech and debate. Applied Communications or Communication 2000, developed by the Agency for Instructional Technology (AIT), may be counted as one unit of English.

**Examples of unacceptable courses:** Yearbook, school publications, acting, theater, dramatics, business English, mass media and photography.

#### ► Mathematics

At least three units of high school-level algebra and beyond, including algebra II.

**Examples of courses generally acceptable toward the three units:** Algebra I, plane geometry, algebra II, precalculus, trigonometry, analytic geometry, calculus and math analysis. Applied Mathematics II and Applied Mathematics III may each be counted as one unit beyond algebra I. Standard algebra courses that have been subdivided (e.g., algebra I is divided into algebra 1A and 1B) may be counted only as one course unit.

**Examples of unacceptable courses:** Computer math, computer programming, consumer math, computer science, pre-algebra, basic math, general math, terminal math, business math, accounting and Applied Mathematics I.

#### ► Social Studies

At least three units, including American history and at least one semester of government.

**Examples of courses generally acceptable toward the three units:** World history, American history, American government, civics, principles of democracy, economics, psychology, sociology, political science and geography. Applied Economics may be counted as one unit of social science.

**Examples of unacceptable courses:** Regional history, family living, family relations, marriage and family, consumer education, and courses generally listed under "practical arts" or "human environmental science."

#### ► Science

At least two units (not including general science) selected from biology, chemistry or physics, one of which is a laboratory course.

**Examples of courses generally acceptable toward the two units:** Botany, zoology, anatomy and physiology, biology, chemistry, and physics. If taught for a full two years, Applications in Biology/Chemistry may be counted as two units of a laboratory science. If Applications in Biology/Chemistry is taught for only one year, then it may be counted as one unit of a laboratory science — content area depends on curriculum covered and training of the instructor. Principles of Technology (PT 1 and/or PT 2) may be counted as one unit of a laboratory science.

**Examples of unacceptable courses:** Life science, physical science and earth science if not taught at the high school level in a rigor comparable to biology, chemistry or physics; also, consumer science, outdoor education and environmental studies.

### ➤ Visual and Performing Arts

At least one unit of fine arts courses in the visual arts, music, dance or theater.

**Examples of courses generally acceptable toward the one unit:** Art I, II, III and IV, sculpture, design, drawing, painting, theater, oral interpretation, dance, dramatics, band and any other instrumental music courses, chorus and any other vocal music courses, and art, music or theater appreciation courses.

**Examples of unacceptable courses:** Speech, debate, radio and television, mass media, stagecraft, and arts and crafts.

### ➤ Specified Core Electives

Three units selected from foreign language (two units of one foreign language are strongly recommended) and/or combinations from two or more of the following course areas: English, mathematics, social studies, science, and visual and performing arts. A computer science course with a prerequisite of at least algebra I is permissible as a mathematics elective. State and/or international history courses are permissible as social studies electives.

### ➤ Related Considerations

*Dual-Credit Courses* — Courses taken in high school for both high school and college credit may be counted toward satisfying the core curriculum requirements.

*Middle/Junior High School Courses* — Courses taken by middle/junior high school students in mathematics and foreign language may be counted as satisfying the high school core curriculum requirement if the content is equivalent to high school courses (e.g., foreign language I and algebra I) and if subsequent courses in the subject are shown on the high school transcript (e.g., foreign language II and algebra II). 🍌

## Appendix C

### *Required Instruction on U.S. and Missouri Constitutions, American History, and Federal, State and Local Government* (Section 170.011, RSMo)



#### ► **Schools Subject To Section 170.011, RSMo, as Amended**

All public and private elementary and secondary schools serving grade 7 and above and all public and private colleges other than privately operated trade schools must comply with section 170.011, RSMo.

#### ► **Subjects Required To Be Taught**

Section 170.011, RSMo, requires all students to receive instruction on the U.S. and Missouri constitutions and in American history and institutions beginning no later than grade 7 and continuing through high school and college. This instruction may consist of units or entire courses but must be identifiable within each school's curriculum.

Students must also receive the equivalent of at least one semester of instruction in the institutions, branches and functions of federal, state and local government and in the electoral processes sometime during grades 9-12. The required content may be taught in an entirely new course of at least a semester in length or may comprise time equivalent to at least a semester within an existing course or courses.

#### ► **Graduation Requirements Contained in Section 170.011, RSMo**

To be eligible for graduation from high school, a student must satisfactorily pass a test or tests on the provisions and principles of the U.S. and Missouri constitutions and in American history and institutions at some time during grades 7-12. The design, content and passing criteria for the test(s) are at the discretion of local school districts. Students must also pass the course or courses designated as containing the required instruction in the institutions, branches and functions of federal, state and local government and in the electoral processes.

#### ► **Designation of Courses Containing Required Content**

Typically, content such as the functions of federal, state and local government and the electoral processes fits within the general scope of courses such as citizenship or civics, government, and current affairs or contemporary issues. One or a combination of those classes should be considered first. Other courses may be designated, but the required content must be clearly identifiable.

School districts may not designate as meeting this requirement courses required to be taken for graduation or for the College Preparatory Studies Certificate. For example, districts may not designate American history as the only course in which the required content is taught. To devote an entire semester of a one-unit American history course to governmental functions and the electoral process would reduce the time available for American history instruction to only one semester. Such a course could not be counted as a full unit toward meeting the

Missouri School Improvement Program curriculum standards or for any other program or purpose requiring a full unit of American history.

► **Grade Levels at Which Studies of Governmental Functions and the Electoral Process Must Be Provided**

The statute, as amended, specifies that courses designated as including instruction in governmental function and the electoral process must be taken and passed during grades 9-12. Instruction on the U.S. and Missouri constitutions and in American history and institutions must, however, begin by grade 7 and continue.

► **Notification of Students and Parents**

Notification of parents and students of these requirements is especially important because all students must take and pass the test(s) on the provisions and principles of the U.S. and Missouri constitutions and in American history and institutions. All students must also, during grades 9-12, take and pass the course or courses designated as containing the required instruction on governmental functions and the electoral processes.

It is essential that parents and students be notified before enrolling the student for ninth grade, and periodically thereafter, of the requirements, the specific courses designated as meeting the requirements, and their individual status with respect to meeting the requirements. No students or their parents should learn too late that the requirements for graduation have not been met. All staff members who engage in academic counseling should actively help keep students and their parents informed.

► **Documentation of Compliance With Statutory Requirements**

Districts should review their entire curriculum for grades 7-12 and identify the lessons, units and courses in which students will receive the required instruction on the U.S. and Missouri constitutions and in American history and institutions. A list of those lessons, units and courses should be available for review.

The tests to be used to comply with the testing provision, the pass/fail criteria and other information, such as the conditions under which they are administered and the number of times the tests can be retaken, should be maintained on file for review.

The specific courses designated as containing the required instruction on governmental institutions, branches and functions and on the electoral process should be clearly identified and curriculum guides should be maintained on file for review.

Students' permanent transcripts should clearly identify the courses taken and passed (or failed) that are designated as meeting the statutory requirement and the date(s) upon which the required tests have been taken (or retaken) and passed. 📌

## Appendix D

### *Policy on Granting Credit for Off-Campus Programs Other Than Dual-Credit College Courses*



Many students who are juniors and seniors in high school can benefit substantially from school-directed and supervised paid or unpaid learning experiences that cannot be readily provided within a regular classroom setting — experiences that can be made available through assignment to off-campus locations under cooperative arrangements with business and industry or other institutions. The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education recognizes and will approve the four types of off-campus programs described below. A school district may offer other types of off-campus programs without Department approval, but the students enrolled in them may not be counted in membership and attendance for state-aid purposes, and the students may not be granted high school credit for the off-campus experience (Sections 161.092 and 161.122, RSMo).

#### **I. Types of Off-Campus Programs**

**1. Academic Programs** involve all students who are enrolled in advanced academic or fine arts classes and have, as their goals, the acquisition of specialized knowledge and the ability to apply the knowledge to situations that cannot be replicated in a school classroom.

*Related Instruction:* Students must be enrolled in and receiving related instruction in the regular high school program before credit can be awarded for the off-campus experience.

*Credit:* Elective credit. One-half unit of credit per semester may be awarded for 10 to 19 hours weekly of off-campus experience or one unit of credit per semester for 20 or more hours weekly of off-campus experience. No more than two units of credit may be awarded during any school year.

*Teacher Qualifications:* The teacher must be certificated in the subject area in which the related on-campus instruction is provided.

*Supervision Time:* For each 10 participating students, 225 minutes per week.

*Written Plans:* There must be a written instructional plan that sets forth specific learner objectives and an evaluation plan for student performance.

*Student Pay:* Students may not be paid for their off-campus experience as part of academic programs.

*Example:* A student enrolled in advanced chemistry spends part of the school day in a chemical company working with technicians. The student will receive credit in advanced chemistry as well as credit for the off-campus experience.

*Core Data Course Code:* 996001-Academic Programs, Off-Campus

**2. Career Exploration Programs** involve all students who have not yet selected occupational goals and who will benefit from exposure to a variety of occupations, as practiced at the job site, so that they may develop their own occupational objectives from direct experience.



*Related Instruction:* Students must be enrolled in and receiving related instruction as part of the regular high school program. The related instruction will provide students with knowledge of occupational clusters, requisite training and experience for occupations being studied, and skills related to obtaining and holding a job. Students may spend no more than nine weeks at any one job site.

*Credit:* Elective credit. Credit is awarded as part of the related classroom instruction. One-half unit of credit per semester may be awarded for 10 to 19 hours weekly of off-campus experience or one unit of credit per semester for 20 or more hours weekly of off-campus experience. No more than two units of credit may be awarded during the school year.

*Teacher Qualifications:* The program must be under the supervision of a teacher who provides classroom instruction in career awareness and related areas.

*Supervision Time:* For each 15 participating students, 225 minutes per week.

*Written Plans:* There must be a written instructional plan that sets forth specific learner objectives and an evaluation plan for student performance.

*Student Pay:* Students may not be paid for their off-campus experience as part of their career exploration programs.

*Example:* A student enrolled in a career exploration program spends nine weeks outside of the school day observing and learning at the job site in an area of occupational interest. The student completes projects and reports related to the occupational area and receives credit in the career exploration class.

*Core Data Course Code:* 997001-Career Exploration Programs, Off-Campus

**3. Cooperative Vocational Education Programs** involve all students enrolled in approved cooperative vocational education. The primary goals for these students are the acquisition of specific job skills and demonstrated performance of those skills on the job. Programs must meet standards established and approved by the Division of Vocational and Adult Education. The programs provide structured work experience in a controlled environment coupled with related vocational and academic instruction.

*Related Instruction:* Students must be enrolled in an approved vocational education program with classes that are concurrent with the off-campus experience. The related instruction may be less frequent than daily but must comply with the approved program standards.

*Credit:* Elective credit. One-half unit of credit per semester may be awarded for 10 to 19 hours weekly of off-campus experience or one unit of credit per semester for 20 or more hours weekly of off-campus experience. No more than two units of credit may be awarded during any school year for the off-campus experience.

*Teacher Qualifications:* The program must be under the supervision of a teacher certificated for cooperative education in the vocational education program area.

*Supervision Time:* For each 12 to 15 participating students, 225 minutes per week.

*Written Plans:* There must be a written instructional plan that sets forth specific learner objectives, an evaluation plan for student performance, and a training agreement signed by all parties involved.

*Student Pay:* Students must receive pay. The employment relationship must be established for off-campus experience as part of cooperative vocational education programs.

*Example:* A student enrolled in marketing education participates in the Marketing Internship Component. She is placed in a marketing-related off-campus experience such as retail sales. The student earns credit for the marketing class and appropriate credit for the internship.

*Core Data Course Code(s):* 016780-Supervised Agricultural Employment, Cooperative Education; 034380-Supervised Business Employment; 040080-

#### 4. Work Experience for Students With Disabilities

- A. Cooperative Work Experience (COOP) programs for students with disabilities is limited to students with disabilities whose Individualized Education Programs (IEP) indicate the need for work experience in a competitive setting and who are also eligible as clients of the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation. Program goals include the acquisition of general skills related to performing work under supervision as well as job-related skills.
- B. Sheltered Workshop Programs for students with disabilities are limited to students with disabilities whose IEP team has determined that a student should obtain skills assessment, training and/or work experience at a local sheltered workshop. The student should be certified for sheltered employment in the following ways:
- referral to the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation or Rehabilitation Services for the Blind for certification, or
  - referral to the sheltered workshop for certification by an Extended Employment Certification Specialist.

*Related Instruction:* Students must be enrolled in and receiving related instruction in the regular public agency program (includes high school and State Schools for the Severely Handicapped) before credit can be awarded for the off-campus experience. This restriction does not apply to students with disabilities whose IEPs indicate full-time work experience.

*Credit:* Elective credit. Credit is awarded as part of the related classroom instruction. One unit of credit per semester may be awarded for 10 to 19 hours weekly of off-campus experience or two units of credit for 20 or more hours weekly of off-campus experience. No more than two units of credit, or twice the number of units of credit granted for related instruction — whichever is less — may be awarded for off-campus experience during the school year. Students participating in the COOP program must be released from school for a minimum of one hour per school day to receive credit for the off-campus work experience.

**NOTE:** A student with a disability whose IEP indicates a need for additional supervised work experience to make the transition from school to the world of work may earn up to four units of credit during the school year for off-campus work experience. The additional two units of credit would be based on increments of 20 to 30 hours weekly of off-campus work experience.

*Teacher Qualifications:* The work experience must be under the supervision of a certificated special education teacher who has been designated and approved as a work-experience coordinator. The work-experience coordinator would also provide or coordinate the related classroom instruction in the regular school program.

*Supervision Time:* One class period daily for each 8 to 15 participating students, depending on the nature and severity of the disabling conditions.

*Written Plans:* The IEP and Individualized Plan for Employment must set forth specific measurable objectives to be achieved by the student and describe a plan for evaluating student performance.

*Student Pay:* Students may be paid for their off-campus experience as part of the COOP program. Students placed in sheltered workshops may or may not be paid during the assessment phase, depending on the type of work in which they are involved. The workshop will contract with the school district for assessment costs on an individual basis. Students in training or employed by the sheltered workshop must be paid commensurate wages.

*Example:* A student enrolled in basic math is released from school the last hour of the day to participate in an off-campus work experience at the local supermarket (working with stockers and/or cashiers). The student will earn minimum wage for his/her work and will also receive credit in basic math as well as credit for the off-campus experience.

*Core Data Course Code:* 196000-Work Experience for Special Education

## **II. Insurance and Liability for Students in Off-Campus Programs**

Students in work-based, learning experience programs who are receiving pay for work performed in an off-campus program will generally be covered by the sponsors' workers' compensation insurance and general liability insurance. Students in academic programs and career-exploration programs who are not performing productive work and are not paid will not be covered by the sponsors' workers' compensation insurance and general liability insurance. Therefore, any school district that arranges off-campus academic or career-exploration programs must provide accidental injury and job-related illness insurance for students and liability insurance to cover any injuries or damages caused by students on the sponsors' premises. Liability insurance to protect the supervising teacher and any other school district employees who might be exposed to a liability risk due to the placement of students in off-campus programs should also be provided by the school district.

Because there is danger of unpaid students replacing paid employees, the school district and the cooperating sponsor should exercise extreme diligence in complying with applicable state and federal labor laws and regulations.

## **III. Attendance Eligible for State Financial Aid**

All four types of off-campus programs must be well-planned and adequately supervised by school district personnel to ensure the school district's eligibility for state and federal funds and to justify the awarding of high school credit to participating students. The following general policies will apply.

- To be counted for membership and average daily attendance for state-aid purposes, students must be under the guidance and direction of certificated teachers employed by the public school district whether the instruction (teaching process) is on campus or off campus. Students who are at least 16 years of age and not over 21 years of age and who are under the guidance and direction of public school teachers for less than the standard school day may be counted as part-time students. (Their part-time membership and attendance are computed according to Section 163.011, RSMo.)
- School districts shall not count students in membership or attendance for any type of off-campus instruction except Department-approved off-campus programs that are adequately supervised by the district's certificated teachers to the extent the students can be considered "under the guidance and direction of teachers" and for which the school district is granting high school credit. School districts have responsibility for students during the time they are counted for school membership and attendance for state-aid purposes.

#### **IV. Program Authorization**

Written proposals for off-campus programs must be approved annually by the appropriate division in the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education if the students are to be counted in membership and attendance for state-aid purposes, if funding is involved, or if high school credit is to be granted. Proposals for academic programs and career exploration programs should be submitted to the Coordinator, School Improvement and Accreditation. Proposals for cooperative vocational-education programs should be submitted to the Coordinator, Vocational-Technical Education. Proposals for work-experience programs for special education students should be submitted to the Coordinator, Special Education Services. 🍌

## Appendix E

### *Policy on Postsecondary Attendance by High School Students — Dual Credit, Dual Enrollment, and Dual Counting for State Aid of High School Juniors and Seniors in College Courses*

Section 167.223, RSMo, authorizes high school students to enroll in courses at colleges or universities, receive both high school and college credit, and be counted in attendance at the high school for state-aid purposes under certain circumstances.

#### ► **Eligible Students**

An eligible student must be enrolled in high school and must be taking postsecondary courses at Missouri public community colleges or Missouri public or private four-year colleges or universities. In addition, there must be an agreement between the school district and the college or university attended by the high school student.

#### ► **Agreements Between High Schools and Colleges or Universities**

The agreement should be in writing, be signed by a representative of the higher-education institution and the school district, and deal with issues such as: which college-level courses will be considered eligible for dual credit; whether or not credits earned can be transferred to other colleges or universities; how the high schools will be notified of students' enrollment; how course completion and grades earned will be recorded and conveyed to the high school; and how class attendance records will be taken and transferred to the high school.

#### ► **Qualifying Courses**

To qualify for dual credit and being counted in attendance for state-aid purposes, participating students must be enrolled in "postsecondary" courses. The Department interprets postsecondary in this context to mean advanced academic and vocational-technical courses, the content of which is clearly at the collegiate level. The courses should be of the same quality and rigor as all other college courses available to regular college students.

#### ► **Nonqualifying Coursework**

Not all students who take college courses qualify for dual credit or being counted in attendance. Students who take college courses that are not postsecondary as intended by the statute or students who take courses outside an agreement between the school district in which they are enrolled and the colleges or universities they attend are not eligible for dual credit or being counted in membership and attendance for state-aid purposes. Those students are treated as part-time high school students and would be counted in membership and attendance for state-aid purposes only when enrolled in classes and actually present at the high school — not when taking the college or university courses.





➤ **Limit on Number of Units Students May Earn**

The statute does not specify a limit on the number of units of high school credit a student may earn as a result of taking postsecondary courses under an agreement with a qualifying college or university. Each local board of education should determine the number of such units it will recognize and modify its policies accordingly.

➤ **Converting Semester Hours Into High School Units**

The statute does not address the number of units of credit a high school may record on a student's transcript for a qualifying course at a college or university. The current standards for Carnegie Units should be applied to the extent possible in transcribing high school credit. Under current Department standards, students may earn one unit of credit for a class that is in session for at least 7,830 minutes. It is not possible to equate college courses precisely to the high school standard, but a reasonable equating would result in recognizing one unit of high school credit for a 5.0 semester-hour college course, one-half unit of high school credit for a 3.0 semester-hour college course, and one-quarter unit of high school credit for a 2.0 semester-hour college course.

➤ **Counting Dual-Credit Courses Toward Accreditation Standards**

School districts may count qualifying college courses in which students are enrolled and for which the district is paying the essential costs of tuition, fees and books and providing transportation at no cost to the students as curricular offerings in their own high schools. The offerings may be counted toward meeting the classification standards.

➤ **Full-Time, Dual-Credit Students Not Allowed**

Students may not take all their course work for a year or a semester at a college or university, receive high school credit, and be counted in attendance for state-aid purposes. A student must be enrolled in high school and taking at least one course for credit in the high school to participate in this program.

➤ **Applicability to Night School Classes**

The provisions of Section 167.223, RSMo, do not authorize a full-time equivalency (FTE) greater than 1.0; therefore, a student who earns dual credit may generate no more than one FTE for a district. If students are counted as full-time students for membership and attendance during the regular school day, they cannot also be counted in membership and attendance for a night course.

➤ **Responsibility for Tuition and Fees**

The statute addresses the question of who is required to pay tuition and other fees that may be charged by a college or university under a cooperative agreement with a high school. Course fees may be paid by the high school district or by the student, depending on the agreement between the district and the college or university. (This statute apparently supersedes earlier attorney generals' opinions that interpreted Missouri's "gratuitous education" constitutional provision to prohibit charging fees for courses offered for credit.)

### ► **Transportation to College Classes**

The Department believes local districts can legally transport students to classes either by directly paying the cost of transportation or by sharing the cost with the state as allowed by state transportation regulations. Under the “no appreciable cost” provision, students enrolled in dual-credit courses may ride buses on routes approved pursuant to Section 163.161, RSMo, for transporting students to and from another high school district, a vocational-education class, or a program for students with disabilities in the community where the college or university is located. The additional mileage from the normal route termination to the college or university and the additional student count may not, however, be included as eligible miles and eligible students in the transportation-aid formula.

### ► **Applicability to On-Campus High School Courses Recognized for College Credit**

In some cases, rather than students leaving the high school to attend college classes, some colleges recognize credit for courses offered at a high school during the regular school day in which the teachers have been appointed adjunct college instructors. Section 167.223 applies only to postsecondary courses on college campuses conducted during the time high school classes are normally in session. Therefore, the statute would have no effect on granting high school credit or counting students’ high school membership and attendance for courses of the type described above. Because the students are enrolled in and attending high school courses, they would be counted in membership and attendance. If the courses are available for all students free of charge, the courses may be counted toward meeting the Missouri School Improvement Program curriculum standards. The Department is not in a position to interpret the provision permitting dual counting of students by colleges and universities as it applies to courses of this type. 🍌

## Appendix F

### *Adult High School Diploma Program*

The continual advancement of technology and the changing social climate mandates a higher level of educational attainment for many citizens. The public schools should be concerned with the educational needs of all citizens. An adult high school diploma program may be one way to meet the needs of some adults. The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education approves and encourages the development of adult education program learning opportunities to accomplish diploma completion as well as other desirable adult education goals within limits prescribed by local boards of education.

According to Section 171.091, RSMo, the school board of any school district may provide for the education of persons over 20 years of age who are residents of the school district out of revenues derived by the school district from sources other than those described in Section 3, Article 9, of the Missouri Constitution (Section 171.091, RSMo).

The adult high school diploma may be granted to adults under the following conditions:

1. Adult education programs must be under the administration of the regular administrative officers of the school and must have the authorization of the local board of education.
2. Adult education programs must be a part of the total school program of the district.
3. Enrollment in the adult high school diploma program may be extended to persons 18 years of age or older who are not enrolled in a regular day school program.
4. The adult high school program should approximate the local basic distribution of courses required for graduation; however, the program should also encompass the more mature needs, interests, opportunities and responsibilities of adults. Courses of study should reflect the intellectual, social, vocational and emotional experience of adults. The adult high school program should offer a flexible course of studies based on schedules that best fit the educational needs of students. Special care should be taken to minimize conflicts with work schedules, family responsibilities and similar obligations of adults.
5. A unit of credit in an adult high school program shall be awarded for knowledge, skill or competency equal to that normally required to earn credit in an equivalent course in a regularly accredited secondary school.
6. Awarding of credit
  - a. Credits previously earned and documented by transcript at grade 9 or above may be used to meet adult high school diploma requirements.
  - b. Credit by course or examination: In addition to granting credit toward an adult high school diploma on the basis of length of time devoted to a course, a school may grant credit on a qualitative basis through the administration of an appropriate standardized subject-matter test. These tests should cover the

content ordinarily included in a regular high school course in the subject.

- c. Credit earned while in military service may be counted toward the adult high school diploma for the following types of educational experiences:
    - United States Armed Forces Institute courses;
    - United States Armed Forces Institute (USAFI) subject examinations;
    - High school course offered through USAFI by cooperating colleges and universities — credit upon transfer from the school offering the course;
    - Marine Corps Institute courses;
    - Coast Guard Institute courses;
    - Basic or recruit training — accepted in lieu of required courses in physical education and health; and
    - Service school training — credit may be granted as recommended in “A Guide to the Evaluation of Educational Experiences in the Armed Services.”
  - d. Schools may accept credit earned by a pupil through correspondence or extension study toward satisfying the requirements for graduation. Such credit shall be earned through the satisfactory completion of courses offered by an accredited college or university.
  - e. A maximum of six elective units may be granted in the adult high school program for documented federally registered trade apprenticeship programs or other evidence of successful vocational learning or achievement.
  - f. As many as one unit per semester up to a total of six elective units may be awarded for regular employment in cooperative work-study programs supervised or taught by vocationally certified teacher-coordinators.
7. Graduation requirements in the adult high school program shall be the same as set forth in the regular high school program except that no adult student may be graduated until a minimum of two units have been earned in residence in the adult high school program.
  8. A diploma issued to an adult under the preceding conditions must be designated as an adult high school diploma.
  9. Adults who meet all state and local requirements for a regular high school diploma may be awarded this diploma.

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Limited funds do not allow for the use of state adult education funds to finance an adult high school diploma program; however, local funds or tuition may be used. Each school district planning to offer the adult high school diploma program should develop a board of education policy using these guidelines as minimum standards for the granting of an adult high school diploma. 🍌

### **For more information, contact:**

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## Appendix G

### *Honorary High School Diploma*

According to Section 160.341, RSMo, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, with the cooperation of the Missouri Veterans' Commission, shall develop and administer a program to be known as "Operation Recognition." The purpose of the program is to award honorary high school diplomas to World War I, World War II and Korean War veterans who left high school prior to graduation to enter United States military service. The Department and Commission shall jointly develop an application procedure, distribute applications, and publicize the program to school districts, accredited nonpublic schools, veterans' organizations, and state, regional, and local media.

All honorably discharged World War I, World War II and Korean War veterans who are residents or former residents of the state of Missouri, who served in the United States military during World War I, World War II and Korean War, and who did not return to school and complete their education after the war shall be eligible to receive a diploma. Diplomas may be issued posthumously. 🍌

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